

November 13, 2018  
The Honorable Ajit V. Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
455 12th Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC, 20544

Dear Chairman Pai,

I'm writing to express my concern about, and disapproval, of the proposals and tentative conclusions set forth in the FCC's September 25 Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making in Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as Amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, MB Docket 05- 311.

I live in Ipswich, Massachusetts where as a mother of 2 I have benefited by having my local cable access channel (ICAM) available to me in order to stay informed on Select Board, School Committee and Finance Committee meetings and matters while my children were young and I was unable to attend. This also includes our bi-annual Town Meetings that are during the evenings and not accommodating for most citizenry. I know that our local Cable Access Channel is viewed considerably for these municipal broadcasts.

Not only does our local cable access serve as a local government source, but it also serves our community for awareness and information in regards to town matters. One example of this is when Ipswich began its "opt in" curbside compost program, ICAM was able to reach the broader community, residents who may not subscribe to our local paper or frequent the internet, on the available program and how it saves the town money in trash hauling fees.

Our local Cable Access Channel is a window into our public schools as it broadcasts the Middle and High School music and arts programs. It also pairs with the Middle and High School on broadcast education.

If Ipswich had to choose between funding ICAM and another important municipal effort, I know that our public access channel would be compromised as Ipswich has many underfunded pressing issues. What a shame this would be! A large door of our community would be closed. With that, there would be less civic/community engagement in voting, Town Meeting, etc.

This local presence enables the residents of Ipswich to watch uniquely local programming about their community and local events and issues of interest to them. And that was the intent of the PEG provisions of the 1984 Cable Act – to enhance local voices, serve local community needs and interests, and strengthen our local democracy. By defining "franchise fee" in an overly broad fashion to include "in-kind" support, the FCC's proposals will shift the fair balance between cable franchising authorities and cable operators and will force communities to choose between franchise fees and Cable Access (PEG) channels, – something that was never the intent of the Act.

I appreciate your consideration and hope you will protect Cable Access channels in our community and others by choosing not to adopt many of the proposals in the Further Notice.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Whitten  
263 Argilla Road

Ipswich, MA 01938